

CD 2012 -- 97/8



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

2012-13
season

University of Toronto Wind Ensemble

Gillian MacKay, conductor

Saxophony (U of T Saxophone Ensemble)

Wallace Halladay, director

2X10 Piano Duo

Midori Koga and Lydia Wong

Saturday, December 1, 2012

7:30 p.m. MacMillan Theatre

Edward Johnson Building

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO WIND ENSEMBLE

Gillian MacKay, conductor

The Shaman Speaks (2009, rev. 2012)

For saxophone ensemble

Vivian Fung

(b. 1975)

Saxophony

Wallace Halladay, director

It Perched For Vespers Nine (2008)

Joel Puckett

(b. 1977)

University of Toronto Wind Ensemble

New York Counterpoint (1985, 2000)

Steve Reich

(b. 1936)

arr. W. Halladay

Saxophony

Tristan de Borba, solo saxophone

Wallace Halladay, director

Lincolnshire Posy (1937)

Percy A. Grainger

(1882-1961)

- I. Lisbon
- II. Horkstow Grange
- III. Rufford Park Poachers
- IV. The Brisk Young Sailor
- V. Lord Melbourne
- VI. The Lost Lady Found

INTERMISSION

Grand Pianola Music (1982)

John Adams

Part I

(b. 1947)

Part II: On The Dominant Divide

2X10 - Midori Koga and Lydia Wong, piano soloists
Jamilynn Gubbe, Keena Eloise, Lydia Harper, solo voices

Program Notes

Saxophony – the UofT Saxophone Ensemble was initiated in 2010 by Wallace Halladay. I worked with Canadian composer Robert Lemay on the North American premiere of his *Tentation d'exil* at the Music Gallery. Last year, we performed Luciano Berio's *Récit* (Chemins VII) in MacMillan Theatre, with Sarah Gates as soloist. We have performed the works of Henry Brant, Salvatore Sciarrino, and John Cage: the latter broadcast live on the Internet on the composer's centenary this past September.

Tonight the saxophone ensemble presents two works originally scored for clarinets, as we continue our efforts to convince composers that the saxophone is a superior instrument. The Reich swings in a style fitting for New York, and the ritualistic drive of the Fung is enhanced by the orchestration for saxophones. Steve Reich is of course one of the pioneers of American minimalism, and Vivian Fung also embraces similar rhythmic techniques in her work. - *Wallace Halladay*

VIVIAN FUNG

The Shaman Speaks

for Saxophone Ensemble (2009, rev. 2012)

The Shaman Speaks is a lively work for saxophones that derives its inspiration from Chinese chant and the interlocking rhythms associated with gamelan music. It starts off with a low chant for the lower saxophone ensemble and then moves into an extensive section using fast interlocking rhythms. After the culmination of these energetic staccato parts, the ensemble fades into a sea of key clicks. The chant returns briefly at the end, book-ending this short work with an exotic atmosphere.

This work was originally scored for clarinet choir and rescored here for saxophone ensemble at the request of Wallace Halladay and the University of Toronto - tonight is therefore the world premiere of the saxophone version.

- *Note by Vivian Fung*

With music described as “evocative” by *The New York Times*, Canadian-born Vivian Fung has distinguished herself as a composer with a powerful compositional voice, whose music often merges Western forms with non-Western influences such as Balinese and Javanese gamelan and folk songs from minority regions of China.

Born in Edmonton, Vivian Fung received her doctorate from The Juilliard School in 2002. Ms. Fung began composition studies with composer Violet Archer and piano studies with Ernesto Lejano. Other early influences include her mentors David Diamond, Narcis Bonet, and Robert Beaser. Fung is affiliated with The Juilliard School and is an associate composer of the Canadian Music Centre. Several of Ms. Fung's works have also been released commercially on the Telarc, Cedille, and Signpost labels. Website www.vivianfung.net

JOEL PUCKETT (B. 1977)

It Perched for Vespers Nine (2008)

Joel Puckett is currently a professor of music theory at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, Maryland. Born in Atlanta, Puckett's earliest musical training came from his father and eventually led him to a D.M.A. in composition at the University of Michigan. For the 2010-2012 season, he was appointed composer-in-residence to the Chicago Youth Symphony. Mr. Puckett's works are performed in the United States and internationally to critical acclaim.

It Perched for Vespers Nine was commissioned by the American Bandmasters and the University of Florida and had its premiere on March 13, 2008 by the Michigan State Wind Ensemble, conducted by Matt Smith. The title comes from one verse of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, a well-known work by the English poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge. In the poem a mariner carelessly shoots an albatross, bringing the vengeful wrath of the spirits down upon his ship and fellow crew. The Mariner finds forgiveness

only when he repents of the act, but is driven by guilt to wander the earth, telling his terrible story and teaching a lesson to those he meets. Puckett attributes his inspiration to his wife's grandfather, who near the time of his death quoted this verse of the poem:

*In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke
white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine.*

The evocative imagery in this stanza seems appropriate to Puckett's compositional style, which follows its imagery only, rather than a programmatic narrative. In fact, Puckett inserts portions of the text at various points directly into the score, perhaps as an expressive aid to the performers. In keeping with this suggestive approach, he uses *klangfarbenmelodie* (German for sound-colour-melody), a technique that involves distributing pitches or melodies amongst several instruments adding colour and texture. Other important facets of his musical language in this piece include emphasis on the rising interval of a minor third, and a falling chromatic flute lamentation. Perhaps most interesting and provocative is Puckett's delay in presenting the full melodic theme. It is not heard until just after the half-way point in the piece, when it is finally and gratifyingly realized by the clarinets. From that point, Puckett's layers increase in intensity before ultimately ebbing to a transparent finish, the "glimmering moon-shine."

STEVE REICH (b. 1936)

New York Counterpoint

For Saxophone Ensemble, arr. Halladay
(1985, 2000)

New York Counterpoint was commissioned by The Fromm Music Foundation for clarinetist Richard Stolzman. It was composed during the summer of 1985. The duration is about 11 minutes. The piece is a continuation of the ideas found in *Vermont Counterpoint* (1982), where as soloist plays against a pre-recorded tape of him or her self. In *New*

York Counterpoint the soloist pre-records ten clarinet and bass clarinet parts and then plays a final 11th part live against the tape. The compositional procedures include several that occur in my earlier music. The opening pulses ultimately come from the opening *Music for 18 Musicians* (1976). The use of interlocking repeated melodic patterns played by multiples of the same instrument can be found in my earliest works, *Piano Phase* (for 2 pianos or 2 marimbas) and *Violin Phase* (for 4 violins) both from 1967. In the nature of the patterns, their combination harmonically, and in the faster rate of change, the piece reflects my recent works, particularly *Sextet* (1985). *New York Counterpoint* is in three movements: fast, slow, fast, played one after the other without pause. The change of tempo is abrupt and in the simple relation of 1:2. The piece is in the meter $3/2 = 6/4 (=12/8)$. As is often the case when I write in this meter, there is an ambiguity between whether one hears measures of 3 groups of 4 eighth notes, or 4 groups of 3 eighth notes. In the last movement of *New York Counterpoint* the bass clarinets function to accent first one and then the other of these possibilities while the upper clarinets essentially do not change. The effect, by change of accent, is to vary the perception of that which in fact is not changing. - Note by Steve Reich

Steve Reich has been called "America's greatest living composer" (*The Village Voice*). His music has been influential to composers and mainstream musicians all over the world. He is a leading pioneer of Minimalism, having in his youth broken away from the "establishment" that was serialism. His music is known for steady pulse, repetition, and a fascination with canons; it combines rigorous structures with propulsive rhythms and seductive instrumental color. It also embraces harmonies of non-Western and American vernacular music (especially jazz). His studies have included the Gamelan, African drumming (at the University of Ghana), and traditional forms of chanting the Hebrew scriptures. - Reprinted with kind permission of Boosey & Hawkes.

PERCY GRAINGER (1882-1961)

Lincolnshire Posy (1937)

A collection of wildflowers is called a posy, and Grainger described this work as a “bunch of musical wildflowers”. *Lincolnshire Posy* composed in 1937, and so 2012 marks the 75th anniversary of this pillar of the wind band repertoire. Based on folksongs collected in Lincolnshire primarily between 1905 and 1906, Grainger’s six movements seek to portray the uniqueness and idiosyncrasy of the original folk singers. Irregular rhythm, unusual tone quality and phrasing are all fashioned out of an intense desire to create a musical portrait of the singer, rather than to adapt the songs to the rules of traditional music theory and composition. The result is a completely original musical experience, both a challenge and a joy to perform. Grainger’s six movements, *Lisbon* (Sailor’s Song), *Horkstow Grange* (narrating local history), *Rufford Park Poachers* (Poaching Song), *The Brisk Young Sailor* (returned to wed his True Love), *Lord Melbourne* (War Song), and *The Lost Lady Found* (Dance Song) - his *Lincolnshire Posy* - are dedicated to the “the old folksingers who sang so sweetly to me.” - *Note by Lisa Jack*

JOHN ADAMS (B. 1947)

Grand Pianola Music (1982)

Contemporary classical composer John Adams is arguably the most celebrated and successful American composer of our day. A five time Grammy award winner, Adams received the Pulitzer Prize for Music for his work *On the Transmigration of Souls*, written in 2003 to commemorate the victims of the 9/11 attacks in New York City. Adams’ writing is strongly rooted in minimalism, a style that features a steady pulse, simple harmony and very gradual transformations of themes – demanding determined focus from performers and listeners alike. He is more often described as a post-minimalist, since his works tend to have more direction and climactic moments than those of older minimalist composers like Philip Glass and Steve Reich.

Grand Pianola Music had its premiere on February 26, 1982 with the San Francisco Symphony, conducted by the composer. Scored for two grand pianos, winds, brass, percussion, and three female voices, the piece was not an immediate success. In writing about the premiere, Adams says “...the audience response included a substantial and (to me) shocking number of ‘boos.’” Listeners felt that Adams was either disparaging the more sober serialist repertoire that was part of the concert or that he was playing a musical joke on the audience, which they did not appreciate. The composer insists that neither interpretation is correct. Rather, he says that he wrote the piece for the sheer pleasure of hearing certain musical “signals” or clichés, piled up against each other. Adams explains that the inspiration for the work came from a dream, during which he was driving on Interstate 5 in California, and his car was approached by two long, gleaming, black stretch limousines, “As the vehicles drew up beside me they transformed into the world’s longest Steinways...twenty, maybe even thirty feet long.”

The texture of the work is subtle. Rippling piano arpeggios rolling in and out of the rhythmically constant fabric woven by the winds and percussion, create a seamless, almost mesmerizing ebb and flow. This ineffably calm effect is paradoxically created by the most intense concentration and skill on the part of the performers who must make invisible the unrelenting technical demands of the music – even to the details of where one might steal a breath unnoticed, or switch instruments rapidly enough to be ready for the next entry.

Part 1 of *Grand Pianola Music* is in fact two movements joined into one without pause. It ends in “a slow serene pasture with grazing tuba”. The second part, *On the Dominant Divide*, is a swaying oscillation of phrases that lead to an eventual melody (a shocking departure from the norms of minimalist technique) that is repeated a number of times, until, says John Adams, it goes over the top, racing to the finish, “urging those gleaming black vehicles on to their final ecstasy.” - *Note by Lisa Jack*

Saxophony

Wallace Halladay, director

Tristan de Borba, soloist (*New York Counterpoint*)

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Sara Everson
Sarah Gates
Andrew Gesing
Scott Harbin

Jeffrey Leung
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Kevin Shen
Dan Wang
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Biographies

GILLIAN MACKAY is an Associate Professor of Music of the University of Toronto, where she conducts the Wind Ensemble and teaches conducting and trumpet. She is also Associate Dean of Graduate Education. An award-winning teacher, Gillian has an active professional career as a trumpeter, conductor, adjudicator, and clinician. She has conducted honour bands throughout Canada and the United States, and is Associate Conductor of the Canadian Wind Orchestra. Dr. MacKay has adjudicated Canadian band festivals at local, provincial, and national levels in Canada. She has conducted honour bands and judged competitions in Singapore and Thailand.

Dr. MacKay has presented clinics and workshops at provincial and state conferences in Canada and the United States, and is known for her work on the relationship between conducting and mime. Also recognized as a conducting pedagogue, Gillian leads the University of Toronto Wind Conducting Symposium each July, and has been the guest instructor at other symposia in Canada and the United States. As a trumpeter, she has a particular interest in the French solo trumpet and cornet music of the 19th century.

Gillian holds degrees and diplomas from the University of Lethbridge, McGill University, the University of Calgary, and the University of Western Ontario. Previously, she served as Instructor of Brass at Medicine Hat College, and Director of the School of Music at the University of Windsor.

Saxophonist **WALLACE HALLADAY** captures the qualities of the modern virtuoso, being at home in numerous styles, from the traditional to jazz and beyond. A specialist in the performance of contemporary music, he has commissioned and premiered numerous works. A soloist with the Vancouver Symphony and Esprit Orchestras, he also inaugurated the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony's "Intersections" Series. He recently worked with Philippe Leroux on the North American premiere of his saxophone concerto in Montreal. He recorded the two saxophone

Sequenzas of Berio and the Colgrass concerto for NAXOS and is in demand as a performer with new music groups across Canada and the US.

Wallace holds a doctorate from the Eastman School of Music, and studied at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam with Arno Bornkamp. Wallace was the 2009 recipient of the prestigious Virginia Parker Prize from the Canada Council for the Arts, the first woodwind player to be awarded in its 25-year history. Wallace is a Conn-Selmer Artist and plays Selmer (Paris) saxophones. He teaches saxophone and chamber music at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music.

Piano duo **2X10** was formed in the summer of 2007 by pianists Midori Koga and Lydia Wong with a mandate to commission new works by Canadian composers as well as to play the great works of the existing duo piano repertoire. 2X10 have been winners of an Ontario Arts Council Grant. **MIDORI KOGA** has been featured as soloist and chamber musician throughout the world, including appearances at the American New Arts Festival, the Al Fresno New Music Festival, the ProMozart Society of Detroit, the World Saxophone Congress in Valencia Spain, and the International Computer Music Festival. She has performed with NEXUS, Soundstreams Ensemble, members of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Esprit Orchestra, and the Toronto Wind Quintet. Midori is Associate Professor of Piano and Director of Piano Pedagogy at the University of Toronto. **LYDIA WONG** appears regularly with the world's pre-eminent performers including Edgar Mayer, the late Lorand Fenyves, Patrick Gallois, Michel Lethiec, Yuri Bashmet, Nobuko Imai, Arto Noras, Erika Raum, Shauna Rolston, and Scott St. John. A graduate of the University of Toronto and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Lydia has been on faculty at the University of Toronto since 2000. She is also artistic coordinator of the Collaborative Piano Internship program at the Banff Centre where she has been on faculty since 1993.

Thank you for your support!

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